



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 5

77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

MAR 14 1997

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:
R-19J

Mary Gade, Director
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
2200 Churchill Road
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: NL Industries National Priorities List Superfund Site;
Granite City, Illinois

Dear Ms. Gade:

The purpose of this letter is to stress the importance of the State of Illinois timely providing the ten percent cost share, required by the Superfund law for the additional work needed at the NL Industries Site in Granite City, Illinois (NL Site). Currently, there are sufficient funds to complete the cap for the Taracorp pile; however, all residential yards, ground water remediation, and remote fill cleanup activities at the NL Site are expected to cease in August 1997 if the necessary State funds are not provided.

The NL Site is a former secondary lead smelter site that operated from the turn of the century until 1983. Activities at the site created four waste streams: 1) approximately 100 residential yards contaminated with lead from smelter stack emissions in excess of the selected cleanup level, 500 parts per million, 2) a 3.5 acres (approximately 85,000 cubic yards) slag pile; 3) over 100 locations where crushed battery case material was used as fill; and 4) groundwater contamination in excess of applicable drinking water maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

Since the potentially responsible parties failed to comply with a Unilateral Administrative Order issued on November 27, 1990, U.S. EPA has conducted the Remedial Design and Remedial Action using Superfund money. The Remedial Action is estimated to cost \$55,000,000. Currently, \$38,000,000 has been obligated for cleanup of the NL Site. U.S. EPA estimates that an additional \$8,000,000 is needed for the fourth quarter of the federal fiscal year in 1997 in order for work to continue uninterrupted. These funds should carry work to the Spring of 1998. If no further state cost share money is provided, approximately 500 residential yards, 25 battery casing fill material sites, and the contaminated groundwater, will go unremediated.

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.

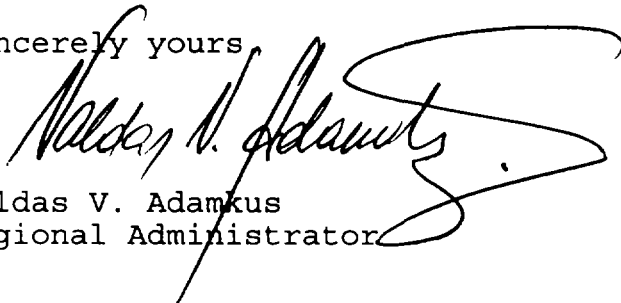


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The impact of work stoppage will be immense. First, children will continue to be exposed to unacceptably high levels of lead contamination, and the ground water contamination plume will continue to spread. The timing of releasing these funds is also important. If state funds are released later than July 1997, then several hundred thousand dollars will be spent just in demobilization and remobilization costs; these costs may not be cost recoverable. These costs take away money that could be spent on remediation. Also, even if the current contractor can be retained, personnel that have worked on the job over two years will be assigned to other remedial jobs and may not be able to return to the NL Site, which could result in a further delay in remediation. EPA underscores the urgency of obtaining state match funds so this project may continue to protect the entire community, particularly children, who are most adversely affected by lead contamination.

We are very appreciative of the high level of cooperation that the State of Illinois has provided throughout this cleanup project, including the cost share contributions required by law. If the additional \$800,000 matching funds can be provided, U.S. EPA will need approximately one month lead time to process the required paperwork prior to August 1997. Please contact me at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valdas V. Adamkus". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Valdas V. Adamkus
Regional Administrator

bcc: J. Mayka
B. Bradley
J. Oaks
S. Bianchin
S. Mulroney, CS-29A

nlgade2.ltr